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## FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

633.35/3-2853

FROM : **AmEmbassy, Montevideo**

880

DESP. NO.

TO : **THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.**

May 28, 1953.

REF : **Despatch 856, May 21, 1953.**

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SUBJECT: **ARGENTINE-URUGUAYAN RELATIONS.**

Dr. Alberto DOMINGUEZ Cámpora, former Foreign Minister, called Mr. Trueblood to his home yesterday to state that the Uruguayan government is genuinely disturbed over the possibility that Argentina's aggressive patrolling of La Plata and Uruguay rivers may cause a serious incident between the two governments. He said he had discussed the subject on the previous day with National Executive Council members. While Domínguez Cámpora did not say that he was informing the American Embassy at the request of Council members, the government has used this channel before to keep our Embassy informed.

The Uruguay River patrol is being maintained at a stepped-up pace by units of the Argentine federal police. On this side, the river is patrolled by units of the Uruguayan Navy and it is this fact which leads the Uruguayan government to assume that an incident might take place. Domínguez stated that his government is leaning over backwards to avoid such an incident. He said the Interior Ministry has invoked the same stricter surveillance measures on Argentine refugees which were in force in 1951 following the unsuccessful attempt against PERON's government.

Domínguez also stated that a recent Argentine plot to kidnap by airplane a refugee now living on the estancia of GAINZA PAZ near Colonia had been foiled when the pilot refused to go through with his part of the deal. (The estancia belongs to the father-in-law of Gainza Paz--the latter is now living in Punta del Este).

Domínguez recalled that Argentina has always claimed sovereignty over the whole of the La Plata estuary up to the Uruguayan shoreline, a claim which has always been vigorously disputed by Uruguay. The question of ownership has been permitted to remain dormant since 1910 under a status quo agreement arrived at by the two governments.

Councillor Barre today confirmed that the Council has recently discussed the possibility Argentina may request that Uruguay take firmer measures against refugees here. He indicated this might take the form of asking that refugees be "interned" in the interior. Barre said that as far as he is concerned he would not agree to any such proposition unless Argentina offered in return concessions to Uruguay which would improve the present situation.

Dr. Juan

HJTrueblood/KHedden/shl  
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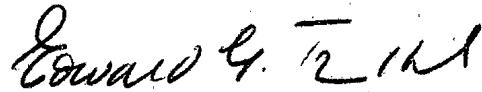
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Dr. Juan YRIART of the Foreign Office, said today that the Uruguayan government is concerned about "illicit travel" going on in both directions between Argentina and Uruguay and had sent one of the destroyer escorts and several smaller craft up the river for patrol duty, as well as stationing small navy contingents in isolated bays and at other points where surreptitious crossings are most likely to occur.

Comment: The Embassy has been advised by several well-informed persons recently that Argentina may soon invoke its claim to jurisdiction to all the territorial waters lying between the two countries (see Embassy Despatch 856 of May 21, 1953). Some informants assert that Argentina may base this stand on the ground that Uruguay has repudiated the status quo agreement by adhering to MSA. At first, the Embassy was inclined to discount these rumors because the Uruguayans enjoy this form of speculative theorizing. There was the additional reason that the government here may wish to sharpen our apprehensions about Argentine policy. However, it is a fact that the Argentine river patrol has increased its tempo and the Uruguayan government may possibly have some information of which we are not informed.



Edward G. Trueblood  
Counselor of Embassy

Copy to:

An Embassy, Buenos Aires

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